A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Thurſday, April 26. 1711.

THE Notice I have taken in this Paper of the Northern Prophecy, having made ſuch a Noiſe in the Town, I could not but think it proper to ſpeak a little more to it—— Some People, I find, are of Opinion it is not worth while: I am no Enthuſiaſtick, yet I differ from theſe Gentlemen in this Point, that nothing of this Nature deſerves any regard; all my preſent ſpeaking, is, if poſſible, that we may know what weight to put upon ſuch a Thing, and what not

It is true, I took no Notice of this Book, when I firſt ſaw it—Tho' I declare I ſaw it in *Scotland* in *November* laſt; but took it for a Thing of ſmall Conſequence, and no Value. As to the Truth of the Things foretold, I look'd upon them as cram'd together to make a little Book and get a Penny, and thought it deſerv'd juſt as much regard as *John Partridge*, *Poor Robin*, or *Willy Lilly* us'd to do, in the Day of their Predictions.

But when I heard that the Dauphin of *France* was Dead, and the Emperor was Dead, both of which were actually foretold in the Original, and ſeveral other Things there hinted at, moſt unaccountably come to paſs, I do confeſs, I was ſtartled a little, and began

began to reflect upon the Trifle, as I then *thought it*, which I had read.

I do own, had I not known ſo much of the Thing, as that I ſaw it in Manuſcript in *November* laſt, and in Print at *Newcaſtle* ſome ſhort Time after; that I have had it by me, and ſeen that there is very little or no Alteration in it, I ſhould have look'd upon it as a piece of Town Witchcraft, in which we are oftentimes ſo exceeding Guilty of Conjuring, that we punctually Propheſie of a Thing as ſoon as ever it comes to paſs——— But this Suſpicion being remov'd from me, I am the eaſier in taking this Notice of the Book.

It is true, the Author has been miſtaken in ſome Things ——————Tho' not very much neither; but he has hit it in *ſo many other*, that upon my Word, it would be hard for any Man that had gueſs'd ſo right, not to be vain enough to think himſelf Inſpir'd — And happy it may be to our late Prophets here, that none of them had a Fund of ſo much Teſtimony to build the Notion of their Inſpiration upon —— If they carried Things ſo far, while nothing they ever Predicted came to paſs, I can hardly ſay what they would have done, had they had ſuch a Clauſe as this to back their Pretenſions.

I acknowledge, I little thought, when I firſt took Notice of this Book, that the Town would ſo eaſily have taken the Alarm at it—— Tho' it might have been expected ——— But ſince I ſee the Thing in every Body's Hand, and in every Body's Mouth, I could not let it paſs without a little farther Obſervation; I would have it have a due weight, yet methinks I would not have more weight put upon it than it deſerves, neither.

And yet, as it is, I ſee the Town running into a Thouſand Errors about it too; for getting a Notion that there is ſuch a Book, every Body buys it, while the Pyrate Printers (as they call them) have Printed it ſo many Ways, and with ſo many falſe Additions and Abbreviations —— that you may now be Bewitch'd for want of Witchcraft, and a Thouſand People will buy the falſe Book for a Peny or a Half-peny, and to ſave the other Peny, take a Story for true, that has nothing it.

This the Publiſher Scolds, Raves, and is Angry at, becauſe he ſays he is Cheated; and no doubt he is ſo, in the Teeth of an Act of Parliament; but that is not the Caſe I am upon—— I ſay 'tis the Buyer is Cheated, not the Publiſher, and if Men will be Cheated, they muſt be Cheated, who can help it?

But for my part, it makes me Smile at the Folly of this Age, and eſpecially of this Town——That will buy Cheats, hug Forgeries, and be as well pleas'd with the Deluſion, as they would with the Truth, ſo they do but ſave the Half-peny; theſe are like People that Dance the Figure of a Dance, but know nothing of the Muſick — If I were to Print the Book for them, I would put in the Stabbing Mr. *Harly*, the filling the Lottery, and every Remarkable Thing that has happned ſince the Time of the Book'; For why ſhould not the People be Cheated that deſire it?—— And as for the Pyrates, Why may they not as well Forge and Lye, as Steal and Rob? I cannot think when they are hardned in the laſt, they can ſcruple the firſt.

But to come to the Book, I ſhall talk a little more ſeriouſly about it———In the true Copy, which I had directly from *Newcaſtle*, and which was firſt Publiſh'd by the Publiſher of this Paper; it may be obſervable, there are *ſome* Things indeed, are actually come to paſs, and *others* apparently in Vie.., which when I look'd over the Thing more narrowly than I did before, did ſtill more and more ſurprize me, and there are ſome which need a little Obſervation.

1. When he foretells the Plague, he ſeems to ſay in one Paragraph *Diſeaſes*, in another, *Infection*, in another, *Plagues of one ſort or another*; then, *many Plagues ſhall harraſs Europe*, and the like; I confeſs, if what we call the Plague, ſhould not, (as God grant it may not) come among us; yet if ſuch Diſtempers as the *Small-Pox*, which are in the higheſt degree Infectious, ſhould Rage over *Europe*, or

or such Feavers as we had in *Britain* last Summer, I shall think we ought to allow the Prophecy right; for any Disease, when it Reigns in such a manner becomes a *Plague*, and I have been told by those that say they have Calculated it, That above 30000 People died of it in *Britain* last Year; among which, I believe we may reckon five Noblemen's Eldest Sons, six or seven of their Daughters and Wives, and abundance of the best Families of our Gentry; and since that, they have found it spread with like fatal Violence in *Sweden*, *Germany*, &c. and is now Raging in *France* —— I would not have the People too nice in this Case —— The *Small-Pox* is call'd the Plague in *America*, and when it gets among the *Indians* it is so, and sweeps away whole Nations, and Heaven has made it a *Plague* to *Europe* this Year; so that we need not stand with the Prophet, whether it be one Plague or another.

2. Another Thing he says, whether it be Verify'd in the Measures of *France* let any one Judge, I am sure, if it is not spoken with a Spirit of Prophecy, it is spoken with a great deal of Judgment and Spirit, in respect to Publick Affairs —— The Words are these. *Prophecy*, p. 5.

France *Consults how to support* Spain, *Embroil the Emperor, bring Home the* Swede, *restore* Bavaria, *doze* Savoy, *fright the* Dutch, *and divide the* English, *and he will, in some Measure, accomplish them all* —— I leave it to all Men to Judge, whether this is not exactly true.

3. Again —— *The Counsels of this Nation shall produce great Strife, Faction, and Malecontent Stirs, with Heats and Animosities among the several Parties that are among us, to the great Encouragement of our Enemies, and Discouragement of good Men; yet the Calmness and Prudence of some Men, shall lessen or at least protract the Danger for some Time.* Proph. 1. pag. 4.

What shall we say, Is this come to pass or no —— Gentlemen? —— I think every Body will acknowledge it.

4. Again —— *The Confederates Attempt Vigorously to Succour King* Charles *in* Spain, *but* O THE SUCCESS! Proph. p. 5.

O the Truth of this, both in what has been, and may be fear'd.

5. —— *Now the* Swedes *prepare to break out of* Pomeren —— *The Armies of* France *and* Spain *are in the Field first; much Blood shall be shed in* Spain *before the end of* February, *and* Philip *shall fight three Battles in* Spain, *in two of which he shall be Victor.*

The Action of *Brubega* and *Villa Viciosa* answer for this, and may very well be the two first; and as this Thing was Written in *October*, or thereabouts, when no Account could be had of those Battles, I think it seems so exact, as is very Unaccountably strange; I leave it to other Men to pass their Judgment.

6. In *April* he tells us, *King* Philip *shall Bombard* Barcelona. *Proph.* 4. p. 8.

This I take to be as Wonderful as any of the rest, for at that Time no Man could have imagin'd, but that rather King *Philip* should have been Bombarded in *Pampeluna* or *Fonterabia* —— Yet he tells us, *Relief shall come to Cha*—— *and he shall chase them in his Turn* —— And we hope this will be true also.

7. *Many Bloody Skirmishes happen between the* Tartars *and the* Cossacks. *Proph.* 5. *pag.* 10.

Two of these we have an Account of last Post, wherein the *Tartars* and the *Cossacks* are the only People that Fought —— Bless us! Where was this Man born? Or who told him these Things?

8. ——

8. ——— *Yet for the Encouragement and Support of the Poor, Heaven promiſes Plenty in the Fields, and there ſhall be no want of Bread* ———

This is the only good News he tells us ——— And never in the Memory of Man, was there a greater Proſpect of Plenty all over this Iſland, by the Account of thoſe that have come out of the Country every Way.

The Death of the Dauphin of *France*, I hinted at before; this he poſitively foretold, and of the Emperor too, and that in the very Time of them, *viz.* That the Dauphin ſhould die in *March*, and the Emperor in *April*.

If all theſe Things are come to paſs already, when not four Months of the 12 are run, and of them not one Month of Action,...What ſhall we ſay at the Years End to this North-Country Prophet?

Nor does it ſeem to derogate from the oddneſs of his Prediction, that he appears Miſtaken in the Article of the *French* Beſieging a great City, and being beaten off ——— It is certain they deſign'd it, and were put off from Attempting it; ſo they deſign'd the ſurprize of another, which he ſays they Effect, but is miſtaken; I only ſay, God forbid he ſhould be miſtaken in nothing, for if it all come to paſs, it will be a ſad Time with all *Europe*.

I ſay again, I lay no ſtreſs on it, as to Inſpiration; but I cannot ſay that all Notices we have of Private or Publick Things, ſhould be entirely ſlighted; which I ſhall ſpeak to by itſelf. Enough of Prophecy.

Now what ſhall we ſay to the Campaign being juſt going to begin, and the Emperor Dead; the King of *Spain* ſent for from *Barcelona*, and a World of new Intrigues ſet on Foot, to bring a New Emperor upon the Throne; I have not Room to talk of theſe Things here, I ſhall ſpeak to them in my next.

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